GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:340
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
SETUSAMUDRAM SHIP CHANNEL PROJECT
Subbarayan Shri K.

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any geo-technical feasibility study has been conducted with regard to the Setusamudram Ship Channel Project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any section of the public has expressed their concern to protect the heritage of "Rama's Bridge";

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to protect the marine life, ecology and the heritage of 'Rama's Bridge'?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING,ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T. R. BAALU)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 340 TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST MARCH, 2007 RAISED BY SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN REGARDING `SETUSAMUDRAM SHIP CHANNEL PROJECT`.

(a) & (b): To assess the dredgability and the quantity of sub-soil to be dredged, Geotechnical Studies such as Bathymetry, Sub-Bottom Profiling, Vibrocoring and Borehole Investigations have been conducted.

(c)&(d) : Representations have been received against undertaking the project claiming that the Rama's Bridge will be damaged by the project. No scientific proof has been found regarding the existence of any ancient man-made structure in the proposed Sethusamudram Ship Channel alignment.

(e) : Environmental Impact Assessment was carried out by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur. As per their advice, the alignment was selected away from the Gulf of Mannar National Marine Park. Detailed Environmental Monitoring Programme is being carried out as per the conditions mentioned in the environmental clearance for the project. Government has constituted a High Level Monitoring Committee to assess the impact on environment and advise the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project Authorities. As far as 'Rama's Bridge' is concerned, none of the Studies carried out so far reveal the existence of any man-made structure in the project alignment.